Reviewer's report

Title: Prevalence and determinants of adolescent tobacco smoking in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

Version: 1 Date: 8 January 2007

Reviewer: Brian Castrucci

Reviewer's report:

General

The proposed article is a standard cigarette smoking prevalence and correlates paper in a unique population. However, the paper is unwritten. The Introduction does not do a thorough job of reviewing the literature. The results only address smoking prevalence, but fail to address attitudes and exposure to tobacco advertising. While the tables are thorough, the narrative contains almost no details. I am not encouraging an overly detailed results section, but the highlights need to be provided.

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Major Compulsory Revisions (that the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1) A re-write of the Introduction and Results section is needed. The tables suggest that the data are well analyzed and findings are of interest, but the current manuscript requires the reader to perform too much analysis on their own.

2) In Definition of Terms, why are these definitions used? While these are standard definitions, it would be appropriate to include references to other works that have used these measures. This will assist readers who are unfamiliar with the definitions common in tobacco epidemiology.

3) Given the manner in which the sample was drawn, was there any correction for clustering? No such reference was made in the data analysis section. Also, were the data weighted to any broader population?

4) In Characteristics of Study Population, I was left wondering how representative this sample was of the adolescent population.

5) The discussion is generally well written. In the first paragraph, there is a discussion of prevalence reported in this study compared to previous studies. While this is interesting, I would want to know the authors reasoning or explanation as to why Ethiopia has lower smoking prevalence than other areas in Africa. I would also have like to see comparisons to other countries outside of Africa to place the prevalence rates in a world context.

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Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

Page 2, Methods, remove the comma in passage "exposure to, tobacco..."
Page 2, Results, remove the i.e. and present the data for females in the same manner as for males.
Page 4, Data Collection, 7th line, 40 minutes includes the letter "o" rather than "0."

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Discretionary Revisions (which the author can choose to ignore)

None to report.

What next?: Unable to decide on acceptance or rejection until the authors have responded to the major compulsory revisions
Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: No, the manuscript does not need to be seen by a statistician.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests.